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**Imagery analysis report**

## **Defensive Measures at Katima Mulilo, Namibia (S)**

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## DEFENSIVE MEASURES AT KATIMA MULILO, NAMIBIA (S)

1. (S/D) Katima Mulilo, the site of administrative and military headquarters for the eastern Caprivi region in northern Namibia, is on the south bank of the Zambezi River, opposite the Zambian town of Sesheke (Figures 1 and 2). Following a mortar and rocket attack on Katima Mulilo in August 1978 by Southwest Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) forces\*, South Africa began to implement a series of defensive measures to protect installations and personnel and to provide an immediate means of responding to any subsequent attacks. This report furnishes a description of new and improved facilities reflecting heightened security efforts observed at Katima Mulilo since June 1978.

2. (S/D) Upgrading and hardening of fortifications at Katima Mulilo Strongpoint West (BE [redacted] Figure 3) were first observed in June 1978, prior to the referenced SWAPO attack. At least 12 quonset-type buildings were added, forming a square perimeter wall with two of the quonset-type buildings and a firing observation position at each corner. By September 1978 the perimeter security wall and a new T-shaped command bunker had been covered with earth. The clearance of additional vegetation around the perimeter of the strongpoint and the installation of a new security fence in a star-shaped pattern were also completed in September 1978. Katima Mulilo Strongpoint East [redacted] approximately 1 nautical mile (nm) east of Katima Mulilo along a graded-earth road that runs parallel to the Zambezi River, was constructed between September and November 1978. The facility, which contains three buildings and at least three tents, probably houses security forces that patrol the eastern approaches to Katima Mulilo.

3. (S/D) Two of the three fire-support bases that have been identified on imagery of northern Namibia are at Katima Mulilo (Figure 4). \*\* Katima Mulilo Fire-Support Base 1 [redacted] 0.5 nm southwest of Katima Mulilo Airfield [redacted], was hastily established and equipped with eight 5.5-inch (140mm) guns in late August 1978. On [redacted] however, this earthen-walled facility contained only two net-covered field artillery pieces. Construction on Katima Mulilo Fire-Support Base 2 [redacted] began in September 1978. Construction was not completed nor was the base equipped with artillery until September 1980. This second fire-support base has eight revetted firing positions (each capable of accommodating one field artillery piece), at least 12 earth-covered quonset-type buildings that form a security wall, an earth-covered T-shaped command bunker, and a security fence in a star-shaped pattern. These defensive features are identical to those at Katima Mulilo Strongpoint West and at other strongpoints built within the past two years in northern Namibia. Fire-Support Base 2 has eight net-covered 5.5-inch (140mm) guns and is apparently replacing Fire-Support Base 1 which is probably being abandoned.

4. (S/D) The South African military headquarters for the eastern Caprivi region, along with other administration, barracks, and miscellaneous support buildings, is at Katima Mulilo Military Camp [redacted] Figure 5), a fence-secured installation adjacent to European residential quarters in Katima Mulilo. This facility was the apparent target of the August 1978 SWAPO attack as at least one administration building/barracks was observed with heavy structural damage in late August 1978. By early October 1978, the building appeared to be at least externally repaired. Throughout 1979, quonset-type personnel shelters were constructed near schools and government buildings in both the African and European residential quarters of Katima Mulilo. In the spring of 1980 construction began on a perimeter defense line consisting of a security fence

\*Reported in the open press.

\*\*The third fire-support base is at Ruacana Airfield [redacted] and defends the nearby Ruacana Dam and Hydroelectric Plant.

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FIGURE 1. NORTHERN NAMIBIA INCLUDING THE CAPRIVI STRIP

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with at least 12 small defensive positions and a strip cleared of vegetation. Upon completion, this fenced and cleared strip will extend from the river around the town and back to the river.

5. (S/D) Katima Mulilo Military Installation South [ ] Figure 6), approximately 4 nm southwest of Katima Mulilo and just off the main highway, was first identified in May 1980. It is secured by a fence and a wall and includes at least 30 tents and a small-arms firing range. This facility may house an indigenous Namibian battalion which is reportedly assigned to Katima Mulilo.<sup>1</sup>

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6. (S/D) The isolation of Katima Mulilo will be partially reduced upon completion of the all-weather road that will connect the eastern Caprivi region with other surface routes in northern Namibia. Mpacha Airfield [ ] is only 9 nm southwest of Katima Mulilo and has a 2,000-meter blacktop runway that can accommodate transport aircraft of the South African Air Force and the government-owned cargo airline, Safair. In addition, since November 1978, at least five Impala (MB-326) ground attack/trainer aircraft have been permanently stationed at Mpacha, providing close air support to ground forces at Katima Mulilo.

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**REFERENCES**

**IMAGERY**

(S/D) Selected available satellite imagery acquired from August 1978 through [ ] was used in the preparation of this report. The information cut-off date for this report is [ ]

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**DOCUMENTS**

1. DIA. DDB-2680-104-80, *Military Intelligence Summary (MIS), Volume IV, Africa South of the Sahara (U)*, May 80 (SECRET, [ ])

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(S) Comments and queries regarding this report are welcome. They may be directed to [ ] Third World Forces Division, Imagery Exploitation Group, NPIC, [ ]

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